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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5910
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 1039
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY PRIORITY 3406
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY 1675
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 002322

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EB, OES

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [SENV](#) [ECON](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT YUDHOYONO ON INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE,
SAMPLE SHARING, CORAL REEFS

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¶1. (U) This message is Sensitive but Unclassified -- Please handle accordingly.

¶2. (SBU) Summary: On August 24, Ambassador Hume spoke with President Yudhoyono after SBY's address commemorating 50 years of American Field Service (AFS) activity in Indonesia. Yudhoyono stressed the need for cultural interaction as the best way to build peace. The Ambassador expressed appreciation that Indonesia had recently shared avian influenza samples and that White House environmental adviser Connaughton had had good discussions in Jakarta, adding that Yudhoyono's letter on the Coral Triangle Initiative had been transmitted to President Bush. SBY said cooperation on avian influenza issues should continue and that a senior delegation would participate in the White House Conference of Major Economies, September 27-28. He thanked the Ambassador for strong support of educational exchanges which brought Indonesian students to the United States. End Summary.

Value of Inter-Religious Dialogue

¶3. (U) President Yudhoyono, accompanied by Education Minister Soedibyo, spoke for twenty minutes to an audience of 500 attending a conference to commemorate 50 years of AFS activity in Indonesia. In a thoughtful address, SBY emphasized the value of AFS student exchanges which brought together people from different cultures, for without such exchanges "the world might otherwise be in the grip of hatred and conflict."

¶4. (U) He discussed the 2005 events caused by the publication of cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in a Danish newspaper, explaining if all involved had benefited from an AFS exchange program the events might not have happened. The Western cartoonist would have known that an insult against the Prophet would have been like plunging a dagger into the heart of every devout Muslim, and Muslims would have understood the Western respect for freedom of expression, even when offensive. The values of neither civilization should be sacrificed.

¶5. (U) SBY said his government would do its part to build bridges. For example, it had hosted in Bali a media dialogue that reviewed the cartoon case and stressed the need for

mutual respect. This year it had also hosted a Sunni-Shia dialogue in Bogor that could help ease the tensions in Iraq. He concluded with a plea for governments to move beyond mere coexistence to engagement and even partnership as the way to address climate change, poverty, and the risk of war.

AI Sample Sharing, Coral Triangle Initiative, ASEAN Luncheon

16. (SBU) After the address, SBY's adviser Dino Djalal asked Ambassador Hume to join the president. At the outset of the twenty-minute conversation, Hume expressed appreciation that Minister of Health Supari had recently resumed sharing of avian influenza samples with the USG and said the USG was committed to expanding cooperation on this issue. He said SBY's letter regarding Indonesia's Coral Triangle Initiative had been sent to President Bush, along with additional information from Minister of Fisheries Numberi. Finally, he raised the question of attendance at President Bush's September 7 ASEAN lunch in Sydney and participation in the September 27-28 Conference of Major Economies in Washington.

17. (SBU) President Yudhoyono expressed his appreciation for bilateral cooperation on avian influenza, including sample sharing, and his view that it should continue. He explained that he could not attend the September 7 lunch in Sydney because he was committed to host Russian President Putin in Jakarta, a commitment which prevented his departure prior to 10:00 am on September 7. After noting that he would travel to New York on September 24 for a UN meeting on environmental issues and the start of the UNGA, he said Indonesia would be represented at a senior level at the September 27-28 White House Conference of Major Economies. He conveyed a strong personal interest in climate change issues, including the preservation of coral reefs.

Value of Educational Exchanges

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18. (SBU) SBY stressed how convinced he was of the benefits of educational exchanges. He pointed out that, while serving in the Indonesian army, he had been sent to schools in the United States six times, and "at last I got my masters degree." He thanked the Ambassador for USG support and funding given for student exchanges, including the AFS programs, and stated he hoped such programs could be expanded.
HUME